



## Wild Yam & Chaste Tree

Stock #1108-7 (100 capsules)

Wild Yam & Chaste Tree is an herbal formula for balancing the glandular system, focusing special emphasis on female hormone activity. The combined benefits of Wild Yam & Chaste Tree may be helpful for treating numerous female complaints associated with a woman's reproductive system, whether stemming from over- or under-active glandular function. Wild Yam & Chaste Tree is designed to alleviate symptoms associated with both menstrual and menopausal complaints.

**Chaste tree**, believed to reduce sexual desire and unwanted libido, was traditionally used by monks. Today, research confirms many of the herb's historical uses, including the treatment of infertility and involuntary ejaculation, menstrual and menopausal complaints, muscle spasms and pain, and even insufficient breast-milk.

Researchers in Germany and the United Kingdom have been studying chaste tree for over 30 years and have found it clearly has an effect on hormonal functions in the body. A recent study published in *The American Journal of Natural Medicine* found that chaste tree berries exhibit significant effects on hypothalamus and pituitary functions, reducing prolactin secretion and the estrogen to progesterone ratio, as well as normalizing the secretion of other hormones. More specifically, chaste tree berries influence gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH) and follicle stimulating hormone-releasing hormone (FSH-RH). Gonadotropin is a hormonal substance secreted by the anterior pituitary gland which stimulates ovarian and testicular functions. Follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) is a hormonal substance, also secreted by the anterior pituitary gland, which stimulates the growth and maturation of Graafian follicles in the ovary which release the ovum during ovulation. FSH also stimulates spermatogenesis in men.

Chaste tree berries are also believed to be anti-androgenic, thus preventing the action of the male sex hormone, androgen.

With regards to female hormone activity, a German research study conducted in 1988 identified that chaste tree berries also have a distinct progesterogenic effect on the pituitary gland, responsible for regulating a woman's menstrual cycle. Stimulating progesterogenic activity helps balance ovarian estrogen and progesterone production during the menstrual cycle, which has been shown to reduce the effects of premenstrual syndrome (PMS). Various clinical trials have found chaste tree helpful for PMS and treating infertility due to low progesterone levels. Although complete benefits often require taking chaste tree for some months, PMS symptoms such as abdominal bloating, breast swelling and tenderness, depression, irritability, premenstrual fluid stagnation in the knee joints, and skin problems which occur premenstrually have all been significantly reduced.

In one such study, 60% of women given chaste tree supplements reported a decrease in or complete cessation of PMS emotional symptoms, including anxiety, insomnia, mood swings, and nervous tension. Furthermore, with the use of chaste tree, absent or irregular periods have been brought into balance, and menstrual complaints such as acne and migraine headaches have been relieved. Chaste tree is also believed to help relieve the anxiety associated with sexual desire in some women. Even difficulty in breast-feeding has been corrected through stimulating the production of breast-milk, as confirmed by German research.

Excessive intake of chaste tree can cause a nerve condition known as formication—the sensation of insects crawling on or under the skin.

**Wild yam** has been used in Mexico since the time of the Aztecs for treating rheumatic problems and as a natural pain-reliever. In Central America, wild yam has been used to alleviate labor and menstrual pain, as well as arthritis, digestive problems, and muscle cramps. Among early American herbalists, wild yam was one of the best antispasmodic treatments known, especially for all types of colic and paroxysmal pain, ovarian neuralgia, spasmodic dysmenorrhea and indigestion. Wild yam was regularly used for reducing the pain of biliary colic caused by gallstones, and for easing the discomfort of passing of small stones.

In 1942, researchers determined the wild yam contained a steroid-like substance called diosgenin, which imitated the effect of progesterone in the body. By the 1950's, pharmaceutical companies were producing the first contraceptive pills made from diosgenin extracted from wild yams. Diosgenin, which is a breakdown constituent of a steroidal saponin called dioscin, was first identified by Japanese researchers in 1936. Their discovery led the way for synthesizing progesterone and corticosteroid hormones such as cortisone. Contrary to popular advertising, wild yams neither contain hormones, nor can their steroidal saponins be converted into hormones in the body—hormones made from wild yams can only be synthesized through chemical procedures in a laboratory setting.

The diosgenin in wild yam (approximately 40%) mimics progesterone's effect upon the body and has become increasingly popular in the treatment of PMS symptoms. Progesterone buffers the negative effects of elevated estrogen levels. However, during a woman's cycle, progesterone levels drop drastically, leaving estrogen levels to rise unchecked which can lead to such PMS symptoms as low blood sugar, salt and water retention, increased body fat, and reduced oxygen levels in the cells.

Wild yam has been shown to dilate blood vessels and stimulate the flow of bile. Wild yam also possesses antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory, and anti-rheumatic properties, as well as promotes perspiration to cool the body and acts as a diuretic to relieve water retention. Dioscin, wild yam's primary active constituent is responsible for the herb's anti-inflammatory action, thus confirming its use for treating rheumatic conditions and gastrointestinal inflammation.

Wild yam has numerous traditional uses among many different peoples around the globe. Also known as Colic root and Rheumatism root in North America, wild yam has been used for relieving arthritis, asthma, bronchitis, Crohn's, colic, colitis, cramps, diverticulitis, excess mucus, gallbladder inflammation, gastritis (especially in alcoholics), irritable bowel syndrome, labor pain, miscarriage prevention, morning sickness, muscle tension, ovarian neuralgia, rheumatism, spasmodic dysmenorrhea, stiff muscles, and whooping cough.